

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 DODE-00 CIAE-00 INRE-00

ACDE-00 /026 W

----- 004245

P 271200Z MAR 75

FM USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2514

S E C R E T SALT TWO GENEVA 0105

EXDIS/SALT

DEPT ALSO PASS DOD

SPECAT EXCLUSIVE FOR SECDEF

E.O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: SUBMARINE MIRV VERIFICATION (SALT TWO-581)

1. IN THE INTEREST OF ANSWERING SOVIET QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RATIONALE WHICH LED US FROM THE PROBLEM OF COUNTING MIRVED SLBMS TO THE SOLUTION EMBODIED IN PARAGRAPHS 1(B), 1(C) AND 2(C) OF THE PROTOCOL, WE WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

2. IN THE EVENT THE SOVIETS ASK US HOW WE DEFINE CLASS, HOW SHOULD WE REPLY? TWO POSSIBLE REPLIES ARE:

-- (A) "A CLASS IS DEFINED BY OBSERVABLE CHARACTERISTICS WHICH AFFECT THE PERFORMANCE AND THE CAPABILITIES OF THE SUBMARINE, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO DIMENSIONS, DISPLACEMENT, LAUNCH TUBE AND OTHER ARMAMENT CHARACTERISTICS, AND TYPE OF PROPULSION."

-- (B) "A CLASS IS DEFINED IN TERMS OF OBSERVABLE LAUNCHER CHARACTERISTICS ONLY."

-- DEFINITION (A) IS MORE CONSISTENT WITH PREVIOUS USAGE OF THE TERM "CLASS" IN SALT AND ELSEWHERE. IT WOULD ALLOW CATEGORIZING,

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E.G., ONLY THE STRETCHED "D" AS A CLASS CARRYING MIRVED SLBM

LAUNCHERS, EVEN IF THERE WERE NO OBSERVABLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ITS LAUNCHERS AND THOSE OF THE STANDARD "D". IT ALSO WOULD STRENGTHEN OUR ASSERTION THAT POLARIS AND POSIEDON SUBMARINES ARE SEPARATE CLASSES. DEFINITION (A) WOULD PROBABLY PROVIDE ADEQUATE VERIFICATION CONFIDENCE IF THE SOVIETS CONTINUE THEIR PRESENT PRACTICES, INCLUDING OPERATIONAL TRAINING LAUNCHES. IF THE SOVIETS CHANGE THEIR PRACTICES IN ORDER TO DECEIVE US, WE WOULD HAVE RELATIVELY LOW CONFIDENCE, E.G., THAT THEY HAD NOT ALSO MIRVED THE STANDARD "D" CLASS.

-- DEFINITION (B) WOULD PROVIDED HIGH VERIFICATION CONFIDENCE, SINCE BOTH THE STRETCHED "D" AND THE STANDARD "D" WOULD COUNT AS MIRVED IN THE ABOVE SCENARIO, EVEN THOUGH THE DEPLOYMENT OF MIRVED SLBMS WERE DETECTED ON ONLY ONE OF THOSE CLASSES. IT IS MORE LIKELY TO LEAD TO OVERCOUNTING AND THUS COULD BE VIEWED BY THE SOVIETS AS MOVEMENT TO A HARDER POSITION THAN OUR DRAFT TEXT IMPLIES, THEREBY DIMINISHING THEIR WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT. IT ALSO LEAVES THE U.S. VULNERABLE ON POLARIS/POSEIDON, SHOULD THE SOVIET CHOOSE TO CITE THIS.

-- ON BALANCE, CONSIDERING THE FOREGOING FACTORS, THE DELEGATIONS FAVORS DEFINITION (A).

-- THE ABOVE SCENARIO REGARDING THE "D" SUBMARINES IS USED SOLELY TO ILLUSTRATE OPTIONS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT TIMELY TO BRING UP THE STRETCHED/STANDARD "D" ISSUE WITH THE SOVIETS AT THIS TIME.

3. ARE THERE ANY CASES COVERED BY PARA 1(B) WHICH ARE NOT ALSO COVERED BY PARA 1(C)? WE BELIEVE THAT 1(B) IS A SUBSET OF 1(C), APPLICABLE IF OBSERVABLE CHANGES ARE REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE MIRVED SLBMS. ACCORDINGLY, IT APPEARS THAT 1(B) WOULD NOT BE REQUIRED IF 1(C) IS OBTAINED. JOHNSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SALT (ARMS CONTROL), ARMS CONTROL MEETINGS, SUBMARINES, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SALTT00105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750107-0382
From: SALT TALKS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975039/aaaaahzh.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 AUG 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <21 AUG 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SUBMARINE MIRV VERIFICATION (SALT TWO-581)
TAGS: PARM
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006